

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00617 221133Z
ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
MCE-00 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /060 W
-----082353 222146Z /41

R 220850Z MAR 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5879
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0617

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, PEPR, IZ, SA
SUBJ: U.S. AIRCRAFT FOR SAUDI ARABIA

1. DESPITE STATEMENTS BY USG OFFICIALS WHICH JUSTIFY
SALE OF F-15 AIRCRAFT TO SAUDI ARABIA BY THREAT
PERCEIVED FROM IRAQ, WE HAVE DETECTED NO REACTION FROM
BAGHDAD. LOCAL MEDIA HAVE FOCUSED HEAVILY ON U.S. ARMS
OFFERS TO ISRAEL AND HAVE DENIGRATED SAUDI PART OF
PACKAGE DUE TO 1981 DATE FOR FIRST DELIVERIES. FOREIGN
MINISTRY OFFICIALS WITH WHOM WE HAVE RECENTLY
DISCUSSED USG CONVENTIONAL ARMS SALES POLICY HAVE AVOIDED
SUBJECT OF SAUDI PLANES.

2. COMMENT: IRAQUIS ARE PROBABLY STUNG BY SUGGESTION THEY
POSE THREAT TO SAUDI ARABIA, BUT ISSUE IS HARD ONE FOR
THEM TO GRAPPLE WITH. IRAQI STRATEGISTS ARE SAID TO
PERCEIVE LONGTERM THREATS TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY AS
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EMANATING FROM IRAN AND ISRAEL, WHILE THEY PERCEIVE
SYRIA AS A SHORTTERM NUISANCE. SAUDI ARABIA IS NOWHERE
ON THE LIST, AND IRAQ HAS MADE AWKWARD EFFORTS TO
REASSURE SAUDIS OF THEIR OWN BENIGN INTENT. NONETHELESS,
IRAQI REGIME IS IN A SENSE A PRISONER OF BAATH PARTY
IDEOLOGISTS WHO RAIL AGAINST "ARAB REACTION" AND OF
PUBLIC HARDLINE IN OPEC. THAT THESE POLITICAL AND

ECONOMIC DISPUTES MIGHT HAVE MILITARY IMPLICATIONS
FOR SAUDI IRAQI RELATIONS, HOWEVER INEVITABLE, PROBABLY
COME AS A SURPRISE TO OFTEN INSENSITIVE
BAGHDAD LEADERSHIP. FOR THE MOMENT THEY HAVE WITHDRAWN
INTO SILENCE.
MACK

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Message Attributes

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Concepts: FIGHTER AIRCRAFT, MILITARY SALES
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Draft Date: 22 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Disposition History: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
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Status: NATIVE
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TAGS: MASS, PEPR, IZ, SA
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